The Archbiſhop of *CANTERBURY's*

Thankſgiving-Sermon

BEFORE THE

KING and QUEEN,

At *Whitehall*, October 27. 1692.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

KING and QUEEN

AT

WHITE-HALL,

The 27th of *OCTOBER*,

Being the Day appointed for a

Publick Thanksgiving to Almighty God,

For the Signal Victory at SEA:

For the Preservation of His Majesty's Sacred Person,

And for His safe Return to His People.

By *JOHN*, Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*.

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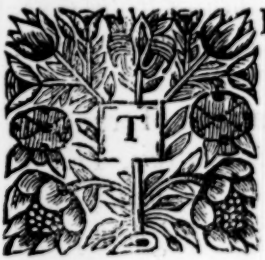
JEREM. IX. 23, 24.

Thus ſaith the Lord, Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, That he underſtandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe lovingkindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth: For in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.



THESE words are a meſſage from God ſent by his Prophet to the People of the *Jews*, who truſted in their own *Wiſdom* and *Might* and *Riches* for their ſafety and preſervation from that Deſtruction which, in the former part of this *Chapter*, God had threaten'd to bring upon

them by the King of *Babylon*. To take them off from this vain confidence is this Meſſage ſent to them, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, That he underſtandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe lovingkindneſs and judgment and righteouſneſs in the Earth: For in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.*

In the handling of theſe Words, I ſhall abſtract from the particular Occaſion of them, and only conſider the general Truth contained in them: Which I ſhall do under theſe two Heads.

Firſt, What we are not to glory in: *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.*

Secondly, What it is that is matter of true glory: *But let him that glorieth glory in this, That he underſtandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe lovingkindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth.*

I. *What*

I. *What we are not to glory in.* The *Text* inſtanceth in *three* things which are the great Idols of mankind, and in which they are very apt to pride themſelves and to place their confidence, namely, *Wiſdom*, and *Might*, and *Riches*. I ſhall conſider theſe ſeverally, and ſhew how little reaſon there is to glory in any of them. I.

1. *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom.* This may comprehend both human knowledg, and likewiſe prudence in the management of affairs. We will ſuppoſe both theſe to be intended here by the name of *Wiſdom*, *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom*, that is, neither in the largeneſs and compaſs of his knowledg and underſtanding, nor in his skill and dexterity in the contrivance and conduct of human affairs: And that for theſe *two* reaſons, 1.

Firſt, Becauſe the higheſt pitch of human knowledg and wiſdom is very imperfect.

Secondly, Becauſe when knowledg and wiſdom are with much difficulty in any competent meaſure attained, how eaſily are they loſt?

Firſt, the higheſt pitch of human knowledg and wiſdom is very imperfect. Our Ignorance doth vaſtly exceed our knowledg at the beſt. Wiſdom

dom in any tolerable degree is difficult to be attain'd, but perfection in it utterly to be deſpair'd of. Where is there to be found ſo ſtrong and ſound a head, as hath no ſoft place; ſo perfect, ſo clear an underſtanding as hath no flaw, no dark water in it? How hard a matter is it to be truly wiſe? And yet there are ſo many pretenders to wiſdom as would almoſt tempt a man to think that nothing is eaſier. Men do frequently murmur and repine at the unequal diſtribution of other things, as of health and ſtrength, of power and riches: But if we will truſt the judgment of moſt men concerning themſelves, nothing is more equally ſhar'd among mankind than a good degree of wiſdom and underſtanding. Many will grant others to be ſuperior to them in other gifts of Nature, as in bodily ſtrength and ſtature; and in the gifts of Fortune, as in riches and honour; becauſe the difference between one man and another in theſe qualities is many times ſo groſs and palpable, that no body hath the face to deny it: But very few in compariſon, unleſs it be in mere complement and civility, will yield others to be wiſer than themſelves; and yet the difference in this alſo is for the moſt part very viſible to every body but themſelves.

So

So that true Wiſdom is a thing very extraordinary. Happy are they that have it: And, next to them, not thoſe many that think they have it, but thoſe few that are ſenſible of their own defects and imperfections and know that they have it not.

And among all the kinds of Wiſdom none is more nice and difficult, and meets with more frequent diſappointments, than that which men are moſt apt to pride themſelves in, I mean *Political* wiſdom and prudence; becauſe it depends upon ſo many contingent cauſes, any one of which failing the beſt laid deſign breaks and falls in pieces: It depends upon the uncertain wills and fickle humours, the miſtaken and mutable intereſts of men, which are perpetually ſhifting from one point to another, ſo that no body knows where to find them: Beſides an unaccountable mixture of that which the *Heathen* call'd *Fortune*, but we *Chriſtians* by its true name, the *Providence* of God; which does frequently interpoſe in human affairs, and loves to *confound the wiſdom of the wiſe*, and *to turn their counſels into fooliſhneſs*.

Of this we have a moſt remarkable Example in *Achitophel*, of whoſe wiſdom the *Scripture* gives this extraordinary teſtimony, That *the*

counſel which he counſelled in thoſe days was as if one had enquired at the Oracle of God: Such was all the counſel of Achitophel *both with* David *and with* Abſalom. It ſeems he gave very good counſel alſo to *Abſalom*, and becauſe he would not follow it was diſcontented to that degree as to lay violent hands upon himſelf: And now who would pride himſelf in being ſo very wiſe as to be able to give the beſt counſel in the world, and yet ſo very weak as to make away himſelf becauſe he to whom it was given was not wiſe enough to take it?

The like miſcarriages often happen in point of Military skill and prudence. A great *Prince* or *General* is ſometimes ſo very cautious and wary, that nothing can provoke him to a Battel; and then at another time, and perhaps in another Element, ſo raſh and wilful that nothing can hinder him from fighting and being beaten: As if the two Elements made the difference; and caution were great wiſdom at Land, and confidence and preſumption great prudence at Sea. But the true reaſon of theſe things lies much deeper, in the ſecret Providence of Almighty God, who when he pleaſeth can ſo govern and over-rule both the underſtandings and the wills of men, as ſhall beſt ſerve his own wiſe purpoſe and deſign. And

And as the higheſt pitch of human Wiſdom is very imperfect in it ſelf, ſo is it much more ſo in compariſon with the Divine knowledg and wiſdom: Compar'd with this it is mere folly, and leſs than the underſtanding and wiſdom of a child to that of the wiſeſt man. *The foolishneſs of God*, ſays *St. Paul*, *is wiſer than men*, that is, the leaſt grain of Divine wiſdom is infinitely beyond all the wiſdom of men: But in oppoſition to the wiſdom of God, the wiſdom of men is leſs than nothing and vanity. Let men deſign things never ſo prudently, and make them never ſo ſure, even to the *Popiſh* and *French* degree of infallibility; let them reckon upon it as *a Blow that cannot fail*: Yet after all, the counſel of the Lord *that* ſhall ſtand, and he will do all his pleaſure; *for there is no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* 1 Cor. 1. 25.

And now we may ask the Queſtion which *Job* does, *Where ſhall wiſdom be found, and where is the place of underſtanding?* And we muſt anſwer it as he does, *It is not to be found in the land of the living*: unleſs it be that one infallible Point of Wiſdom to which God directs every man, and of which every man is capable, *viz.* Religion and the fear of God, *Unto man he ſaid, Behold!* Job 28. 12. Job 28. 28.

Behold! the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom; and to depart from evil is underſtanding.

Secondly, When knowledg and wiſdom are with great difficulty in any competent meaſure attain'd, how eaſily are they loſt? By a diſeaſe, by a blow upon the head; by a ſudden and violent paſſion, which may diſorder the ſtrongeſt Brain and confound the cleareſt Underſtanding in a moment: Nay even the exceſs of knowledg and wiſdom, eſpecially if attended with pride as too often it is, is very dangerous and does many times border upon diſtraction and run into madneſs: Like an *Athletick* conſtitution and perfect ſtate of health, which is obſerv'd by *Phyſicians* to verge upon ſome dangerous diſeaſe, and to be a forerunner of it.

And when a man's underſtanding is once craz'd and ſhatter'd, how are the fineſt notions and thoughts of the wiſeſt man blunder'd and broken, perplex'd and entangled? like a puzzl'd lump of ſilk, ſo that the man cannot draw out a thought to any length, but is forc'd to break it off and to begin at another end. Upon all which and many more accounts, *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom*, which is ſo very imperfect; ſo hard to be attain'd, and yet ſo eaſie to be loſt.

2. *Neither*

2. *Neither let the mighty man glory in his might.* 2.
Which whether it be meant of natural ſtrength of body, or of military force and power, how weak and imperfect is it, and how frequently foil'd by an unequal ſtrength?

If we underſtand it of the natural ſtrength of mens bodies, how little reaſon is there to glory in that, in which ſo many of the Creatures below us do by ſo many degrees excell us? In that, which may ſo many ways be loſt; by ſickneſs, by a maime, and by many other external accidents; and which however will decay of it ſelf, and by age ſink into infirmity and weakneſs.

And how little reaſon is there to glory in that, which is ſo frequently foil'd by an unequal ſtrength? of which *Goliah* is a famous Inſtance. When he defied the Hoſt of *Iſrael*, and would needs have the matter decided by ſingle Combate, God inſpired *David* to accept the Challenge; who tho he was no wiſe comparable to him in ſtrength, and would have been nothing in his hands in cloſe fight, yet God directed him to aſſail him at a diſtance by a weapon that was too hard for him, a ſtone out of a ſling, which ſtruck the Giant in the forehead and brought his unweildy bulk down to the earth.

Or

Or if by *might* we underſtand military force and power, how little likewiſe is that to be glorried in? conſidering the uncertain events of War, and how very often and remarkably the Providence of God doth interpoſe to caſt the Victory on the unlikely Side. It is *Solomon's* obſervation, that ſuch are the interpoſitions of Divine Providence in human Affairs, that Event of things is many times not at all anſwerable to the power and probability of ſecond Cauſes: *I returned*, ſays he, *and ſaw under the Sun, that the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong.* Eccl. 9. 11.

And one way, among many others, whereby the Providence of God doth often interpoſe to decide the events of War, is by a remarkable change of the Seaſons and Weather in favour of one Side: As by ſending great Snows, or violent Rains, to hinder the early motion and march of a powerful Army, to the diſappointment or prejudice of ſome great Deſign: By remarkable Winds and Storms at Sea, to prevent the conjunction of a powerful Fleet: and by governing all theſe for a long time together ſo viſibly to the advantage of one Side as utterly to defeat the well laid deſign of the other. Of all which, by the great mercy and goodneſs of God to us, we have had the happy experience in all

all our late ſignal Deliverances and Victories.

And here I cannot but take notice of a paſſage to this purpoſe in the Book of *Job*: Which may deſerve our more attentive regard and conſideration, becauſe I take this Book to be incomparably the moſt ancient of all other, and much elder than *Moſes*: And yet it is written with as lively a ſenſe of the Providence of God, and as noble Figures and flights of Eloquence as perhaps any Book extant in the world. The *Paſſage* I mean is, where God to convince *Job* of his ignorance in the ſecrets of Nature and Providence poſeth him with many hard Queſtions, and with this amongſt the reſt, *Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the Snow? haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the Haile? which I have reſerv'd againſt the time of trouble, againſt the Day of Battel and War.* The meaning of which is, that the Providence of God doth ſometimes interpoſe to determine the events of War, by governing the Seaſons and the Weather, and by making the Snows and Rains, *the Winds and Storms to fulfil his word* and to execute his pleaſure. Job 38. 22, 23.

Of this we have a remarkable Inſtance in the defeat of *Siſera*'s mighty Army; againſt whom, in the Song of *Deborah*, the *Stars* are ſaid to *have fought in their courſes*: The expreſſion is *Poetical*, but

but the plain meaning of it is, that by mighty Rains, which the common Opinion did aſcribe to a ſpecial influence of the *Planets*, the River of *Kiſhon*, near which *Siſera*'s Army lay, was by ſudden Rains ſo raiſed and ſwoln as to drown the greateſt part of that huge Hoſt. For ſo *Deborah* explains the *fighting of the Stars in their courſes againſt Siſera*: *They fought*, ſays *ſhe*, *from Heaven, the ſtars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſera, *the River of* Kiſhon *ſwept them away*: As if the Stars, which were ſuppoſed by their influence to have cauſed thoſe ſudden and extraordinary Rains, had ſet themſelves in Battel-array againſt *Siſera* and his Army.

Therefore, *let not the mighty man glory in his* might, which is ſo ſmall in it ſelf, but in oppoſition to God is weakneſs and nothing. *The weakneſs of God*, ſays *St. Paul, is ſtronger than men.* All power to do miſchief is but impotence, and
Pſ. 52. 1. therefore no mater of boaſting: *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf, thou Tyrant, that thou art able to do miſchief? the goodneſs of God endureth continually*: The goodneſs of God is too hard for the pride and malice of man, and will laſt and hold out when that has tir'd and ſpent it ſelf.

3. Thirdly, *Let not the rich man glory in his riches.* In theſe, men are apt to pride themſelves: even the

the meaneſt and pooreſt ſpirits, who have nothing to be proud of but their money, when they have got good ſtore of that together, how will they ſwell and ſtrut? as if becauſe they are *rich* and *increaſed in goods* they *wanted nothing*.

But we may do well to conſider, that Riches are things without us; not the real excellencies of our Nature, but the accidental ornaments of our Fortune. If they deſcend upon us, they are the priviledge of our Birth, not the effect of our wiſdom and induſtry; and thoſe things in the procurement whereof we had no hand, we can hardly call our own: And if they be the fruit of our own prudent induſtry, that is no ſuch matter of glorying; becauſe men of much ſlower underſtandings do commonly outdo others in diligence and drudging, their minds lying more level to the low deſign of being rich.

At the beſt, Riches are uncertain. *Charge them*, ſays *St. Paul*, *that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches*: Men have little reaſon to pride themſelves, or to place their confidence in that which is uncertain, and even next to that which is not: So the wiſe man ſpeaks of Riches, *Wilt thou ſet thine heart upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themſelves wings, and fly as an Eagle towards heaven:* He expreſſes Prov. 23. 5.

preſſes it in ſuch a manner, as if a rich man ſate brooding over an Eſtate till it was *fledg'd* and had gotten it ſelf wings to fly away.

But that which is the moſt ſtinging conſideration of all is, that many men have an evil eye upon a good Eſtate; ſo that inſtead of being the means of our happineſs it may prove the occaſion of our ruin: So the ſame Wiſe man obſerves, *There is a ſore evil which I have ſeen under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.* And it is not without example, that a very rich man hath been excepted out of a general Pardon, both as to Life and Eſtate, for no other viſible reaſon but his vaſt and overgrown Fortune: So *Solomon* obſerves to us again, *Such are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain, which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.* And why ſhould any man be proud of his danger, of that which one time or other may be the certain and only cauſe of his ruin? A man may be too rich to be forgiven a fault which would never have been proſecuted againſt a man of a middle fortune. For theſe reaſons, and a great many more, *Let not the rich man glory in his riches.*

Eccl. 5. 13.

Prov. 1. 18.

II. II. I proceed to conſider, *What it is that is matter of true glory? But let him that glorieth glory in this,*

this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe lovingkindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth: For in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.

That he underſtandeth and knoweth me: Here are two words uſed to expreſs the thing more fully, *underſtanding* and *knowledg*; which ſeem not only to import right apprehenſions of the Being, and Providence, and Perfections of God; but likewiſe a lively ſenſe of theſe things, and affections ſuitable to theſe apprehenſions.

That he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, that is the Creator, and the Sovereign Governor of the World.

Which exerciſe lovingkindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth.

The beſt knowledg of Religion, and that which is the foundation of all the reſt, is the knowledg of the Divine Nature and Perfections: eſpecially of thoſe which are moſt proper for our imitation; and ſuch are thoſe mentioned in the *Text*, *lovingkindneſs*, and *judgment*, and *righteouſneſs*; which we may diſtinguiſh thus: *Lovingkindneſs* comprehends Gods milder Attributes, his *Goodneſs*, and *Mercy*, and *Patience*: *Judgment* ſignifies his ſeverer dealings with men, whether in the chaſtiſement of his People, or in

the remarkable puniſhment of great Offenders for example and warning to others: *Righteouſneſs* ſeems to be a word of a larger ſignification, and to denote that univerſal Rectitude of the Divine Nature which appears in all the adminiſtrations of his Providence here below; for the Text ſpeaks of the exerciſe of theſe Perfections in this world: *which exerciſe lovingkindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth.*

Several of the Perfections of the Divine Nature are incommunicable to a Creature, and therefore cannot be thought to be propoſed to us for a Pattern; as *ſelf-exiſtence*, *independence*, and *all-ſufficiency*; the *eternity*, and the *immenſity* of the Divine Being; to be the *original Cauſe* of all other things, and the *Sovereign Governour* of the whole World: For God only is ſufficient for *that*; and to be a Match for all the World, a *nec pluribus impar*, is not a *Motto* fit for a mortal man. A Creature may ſwell with pride till it burſt, before it can ſtretch it ſelf to this pitch of Power and Greatneſs: It is an inſufferable preſumption, and a ſottiſh Ignorance of the neceſſary bounds and limits of our Being, to think to reſemble God in theſe Perfections: This was the ambition of *Lucifer*, to *aſcend into Heaven*, and to *be like the moſt High.*

In our imitation of God we muſt ſtill keep within

within the ſtation of Creatures; not affecting an *independency* and *ſovereignty* like God, and to be *omnipotent* as he is: *Haſt thou an arm like God, and canſt thou thunder with a voice like Him?* as God himſelf argues with *Job*. Job 40. 9.

For in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord. God takes pleaſure to exerciſe theſe Perfections himſelf, and to ſee them imitated by us; and the imitation of theſe Divine Perfections is our perfection and glory; in compariſon of which all human *wiſdom*, and *power*, and *riches*, are ſo far from being matter of glory, that they are very deſpicable and pitiful things: Knowledge and skill to deviſe miſchief, and power to effect it, are the true nature and Character of the Devil and his Angels; thoſe Apoſtate and accurſed Spirits, who in temper and diſpoſition are moſt contrary to God, who is the Rule and Pattern of all perfection.

I ſhall only make two *Obſervations* and *Inferences* from what hath been ſaid, and then apply the whole Diſcourſe to the great Occaſion of this Day: And they are theſe.

Firſt, That the wiſeſt and ſureſt Reaſonings in Religion are grounded upon the unqueſtionable Perfections of the Divine Nature.

Secondly,

Secondly, That the Nature of God is the true *Idea* and Pattern of Perfection and Happineſs.

First, *That the wiſeſt and ſureſt Reaſonings in Religion are grounded upon the unqueſtionable Perfections of the Divine Nature*: Upon thoſe more eſpecially which to us are moſt eaſie and intelligible: ſuch as are thoſe mentioned in the *Text*. And this makes the knowledge of God, and of theſe Perfections, to be ſo uſeful and ſo valuable: Becauſe all Religion is founded in right notions of God, and of his Perfections: Inſomuch that Divine Revelation it ſelf does ſuppoſe theſe for its foundation, and can ſignify nothing to us unleſs theſe be firſt known and believed: For unleſs we be firſt firmly perſuaded of the Providence of God, and of his particular care of Mankind, why ſhould we ſuppoſe that he makes any Revelation of his Will to us? Unleſs it be firſt naturally known that God is a God of truth, what ground is there for the belief of his Word? So that the Principles of *Natural* Religion are the foundation of that which is Reveal'd: And therefore nothing can in Reaſon be admitted to be a Revelation from God, which does plainly contradict his eſſential Perfections.

Upon

Upon this *Principle*, a great many *Doctrines* are without more ado to be rejected, becauſe they do plainly and at firſt ſight contradict the Divine Nature and Perfections. I will give a few *Inſtances*, inſtead of many that might be given.

In vertue of this *Principle* I cannot believe, upon the pretended Authority or Infallibility of any Perſon or Church, that Force is a fit Argument to produce Faith: No man ſhall ever perſuade me, no not the Biſhop of *Meaux* with all his Eloquence, that Priſons and Tortures, Dragoons and the Galleys, are proper means to convince the Underſtanding, and either *Chriſtian* or *Human* methods of converting men to the true Religion.

For the ſame Reaſon I cannot believe, that God would not have men to underſtand their publick Prayers, nor the Leſſons of Scripture which are read to them: Becauſe a Leſſon is ſomething that is to be learnt, and therefore a Leſſon that is not to be underſtood is nonſenſe; for if it be not underſtood how can it be learnt?

As little can I believe, that God who cauſed the *Holy Scriptures* to be written for the inſtruction of mankind, did ever intend that *they* ſhould be

be lock'd up and concealed from the People in an unknown Tongue.

Leaſt of all can I believe that *Doctrine* of the Council of *Trent*, That the ſaving efficacy of the *Sacraments* doth depend upon the intention of the Prieſt that adminiſters them: Which is to ſay, that though the People believe and live never ſo well, yet they may be damn'd by ſhoals, and whole Pariſhes together, at the pleaſure of the Prieſt: And this for no other reaſon, but becauſe the Prieſt is ſo croſs and ſo cruel that he will not intend to ſave them.

Now can any man believe this, that hath any tolerable notion either of the Goodneſs or Juſtice of God? May we not appeal to God in this, as *Abraham* did in another Caſe? *Wilt thou deſtroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee, to do after this manner: Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Much more, to deſtroy the righteous for the wicked, and that righteous and innocent People ſhould lye at the mercy and will of a wicked and perverſe Prieſt, to be ſav'd or damn'd by him as he thinks fit, *That be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* For, to drive the argument to the head, if this be to do right there is no poſſibility of doing wrong.

Thus

Thus in things which are more obſcure we ſhould govern all our Reaſonings concerning God and Religion by that which is clear and unqueſtionable, and ſhould with *Moſes* lay down this for a certain Principle, *All his wayes are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is He*: And ſay with St. *Paul*, *Is there then unrighteouſneſs with God? God forbid?* And again, *We know that the Judgment of God is according to truth.*

2*ly*, The other *Inference* is this, *That the Nature of God is the true* Idea *and Pattern of Perfection and Happineſs*: And therefore nothing but our conformity to it can make us happy: And for this reaſon, to underſtand and know God is our great excellency and glory, becauſe it is neceſſary to our imitation of *Him* who is the beſt and happieſt Being. And ſo far as we are from reſembling God, ſo far are we diſtant from Happineſs and the true temper of the Bleſſed. For Goodneſs is an eſſential ingredient of Happineſs; and as without Goodneſs there can be no true Majeſty and Greatneſs, ſo neither any true Felicity and Bleſſedneſs.

Now Goodneſs is a generous diſpoſition of mind to diffuſe and communicate it ſelf by making others to partake of our Happineſs, in ſuch degrees as they are capable: For no Being is ſo happy as it might be, that hath not the power and the pleaſure to make others happy: This ſurely is the higheſt pleaſure, I had almoſt ſaid pride, of a great Mind.

In vain therefore do we dream of Happineſs in any thing without us. Happineſs muſt be within us; the foundation of it muſt be laid in the inward frame and diſpoſition of our ſpirits: And the very ſame cauſes and ingredients which make up the Happineſs of God muſt be found in us, though in a much inferiour degree, or we can not be happy. They underſtand not the nature of Happineſs, who hope for it upon any other termes: He who is the Authour and fountain of Happineſs can not convey it to us by any other way, than by planting in us ſuch diſpoſitions of mind as are in truth a kind of participation of the Divine Nature; and by enduing us with ſuch qualities as are the neceſſary materials of Happineſs: And a man may aſſoon be well without Health as happy without Goodneſs.

If

If a wicked man were taken up into Heaven, yet if he ſtill continue the ſame bad man that he was before, *cœlum, non animum mutavit*, he may have chang'd the *Climate*, and be gone into a far Countrey; but becauſe he carries *himſelf* ſtill along with him, he will ſtill be miſerable from himſelf: Becauſe the mans mind is not chang'd all the while, which would ſignifie a thouſand times more to his happineſs, than change of place, or of any outward circumſtances whatſoever: For a bad man hath a *Fiend* in his own Breſt, and the fewel of Hell in his guilty Conſcience.

There is a certain kind of temper and diſpoſition which is neceſſary and eſſential to Happineſs, and *that* is Holineſs and Goodneſs, which is the very Nature of God; and ſo far as any man departs from this temper, ſo far he removes himſelf and runs away from happineſs. And here the foundation of Hell is laid, in the evil diſpoſition of a mans own mind, which is naturally a torment to it ſelf: And till this be cur'd, it is as impoſſible for him to be happy, as for a Limb that is out of joint to be at eaſe; becauſe the mans Spirit is out of order, and off the hinges, and as it were toſs'd from its Center; and till that be ſet right,

and reſtored to its proper and natural ſtate, the man will be perpetually unquiet, and can have no reſt and peace within himſelf. *The wicked*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *is like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt: There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked*: No peace with God, no peace with his own mind; for a bad man is at perpetual diſcord and Wars within himſelf: And *hence*, as St. *James* tells us, *come Wars and fightings without us, even from our Luſts which warr in our members.*

And now that I have mention'd *Wars and fightings without us*, this cannot but bring to mind the great and glorious Occaſion of this Day: Which gives us manifold Cauſe of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to Almighty God: For ſeveral wonderful Mercies and Deliverances; and more particularly, for a moſt glorious Victory at Sea, vouchſafed to Their *Majeſties* Fleet in this laſt Summers Expedition.

For ſeveral great Mercies and Deliverances: For a wonderful Deliverance indeed, from a ſudden *Invaſion* deſign'd upon us by the inveterate and implacable Enemies of our Peace and Religion; which by the merciful Providence of God was happily and ſtrangely prevented, when it was juſt upon the point of execution.

Next,

Next, for the preſervation of our *Gracious Sovereign*, from that horrid and moſt barbarous Attempt deſign'd upon his Sacred Perſon: And from thoſe great and manifold Dangers to which he was expoſed in his late tedious Expedition: And for His ſafe and moſt welcom Return to us.

And laſtly, For a moſt glorious *Victory at Sea*: The greateſt and the cheapeſt that ever the Sun ſaw, from his firſt ſetting out to run his Courſe. The Opportunity indeed of this Victory was through the raſhneſs and confidence of our Enemies, by the wiſe Providence of God put into our hands: But the improvement of this Opportunity into ſo great and happy a Victory we owe, under God, to the matchleſs Conduct and Courage of the Brave *Admiral*, and to the invincible Reſolution and Valour of the *Captains* and *Seamen*.

This great Deliverance from the deſign'd *Invaſion*, and this glorious *Victory*, God vouchſaf'd to us *at Home*, whilſt His Sacred Majeſty was ſo freely hazarding his Royal Perſon *abroad*, in the Publick Cauſe of the Rights and Liberties of almoſt all *Europe*.

And

And now what may God juſtly expect from us, as a meet return for his Goodneſs to us? What? but that we ſhould *glorifie* Him, firſt by *offering praiſe* and thankſgiving; and then, by *ordering our converſation aright*, that he may ſtill delight to *ſhew* us *his Salvation.*

God might have ſtood aloof from us in the Day of our diſtreſs, and have ſaid to us, as He once did to the People of *Iſrael*, ſo often have I delivered you from the hands of your Enemies, but ye have ſtill provok'd me more and more, *Wherefore I will deliver you no more*: He might have ſaid of us, as he did of the ſame People, *I will hide my face from them, I will ſee what their end ſhall be*: *For they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith*: Our reſolutions and promiſes of better obedience are not to be truſted; all our Repentance and *Righteouſneſs* are but *as the morning cloud, and like the early dew which paſſeth away*: Nay methinks God ſeems now to ſay to us, as he did of old to *Jeruſalem*, *Be inſtructed*, O Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, and I make thee deſolate, a Land not inhabited.*

Judg. 10. 13.

Deut. 32. 20.

Jer. 6. 8.

We are here met together this Day, to pay our Solemn acknowledgments to *the God of our Salvation*; *who hath ſhewed ſtrength with his arm,*

and

and hath ſcattered the proud in the imagination of their heart: Even to *him that exerciſeth loving-kindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth*: In *Him* will we glory as our ſure Refuge and Defence, as our Mighty Deliverer, and the Rock of our Salvation.

And now I have only to entreat your patience a little longer, whilſt I apply what hath been diſcourſed upon this *Text* a little more cloſely to the Occaſion of this Day. I may be tedious, but I will not be long.

And bleſſed be God for this happy *Occaſion*: The greateſt *England* ever had, and, in the true conſequences of it, perhaps the greateſt that *Europe* ever had of Praiſe and Thankſgiving.

You have heard two ſorts of Perſons deſcribed in the *Text*, by very different Characters: The *One*, that glory in their *Wiſdom* and *Might*, and Riches: The *other*, that *glory in this, that* they *underſtand and know God to be the Lord, which exerciſeth loving-kindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth.*

And we have ſeen theſe two *Characters* exemplified, or rather drawn to the Life, in this preſent Age. We who live in this Weſtern part of *Chriſtendom* have ſeen a *mighty Prince*, by the

the juſt permiſſion of God raiſed up to be a Terrour and Scourge to all his Neighbours: A *Prince*, who had in perfection all the Advantages mentioned in the former part of the *Text*: And who, in the opinion of many who had been long dazzled with his Splendour and Greatneſs, hath paſs'd for many years, for the moſt *Politick*, and *Powerful*, and *Richeſt Monarch* that hath appear'd in theſe parts of the World, for many Ages:

Who hath govern'd his Affairs by the deepeſt and ſteddyeſt Counſels, and the moſt refin'd Wiſdom of this World: A Prince mighty and Powerful in his Preparations for War; formidable for his vaſt and well diſciplin'd Armyes, and for his great Naval Force: And who had brought the Art of War almoſt to that perfection, as to be able to Conquer and do his buſineſs without fighting: A Myſtery hardly known to former Ages and Generations: And all this Skill and Strength united under one abſolute Will, not hamper'd or bound up by any reſtraints of Law or Conſcience.

A Prince that commands the Eſtates of all his Subjects, and of all his Conqueſts; which hath furniſh'd him with an almoſt inexhauſti-

ble

ble Treaſure and Revenue: And One, who if the World doth not greatly miſtake him; hath ſufficiently *gloryed* in all theſe Advantages, and even beyond the rate of a mortal man.

But not *knowing God to be the Lord, which exerciſes loving-kindneſs, and judgment, and righteouſneſs in the Earth*; How hath the pride of all his Glory been ſtain'd by Tyranny and Oppreſſion, by Injuſtice and Cruelty; by enlarging his Dominions without Right, and by making War upon his Neighbours without Reaſon, or even colour of Provocation? And this in a more Barbarous manner than the moſt Barbarous Nations ever did; carrying Fire and Deſolation whereſoever he went, and laying waſt many and great Cities without neceſſity, and without pity.

And now behold what a terrible Rebuke the Providence of God hath given to this mighty Monarch, in the full Carrier of his Fortune and Fury. The conſideration whereof brings to my thoughts thoſe Paſſages in the *Prophet* concerning old *Babylon*, that ſtanding and perpetual Type of the great Oppreſſors and Perſecutors of Gods true Church and Religion: *How is the Oppreſſour ceaſed? the exactour of gold ceaſed? He who ſmote the People in wrath with* Iſa. 14.

a continual ſtroke, he who ruled the Nations in anger is himſelf perſecuted, and none hindreth. The whole Earth is at reſt and is quiet, and breaks forth into ſinging: The grave beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming; it ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the Captains of the Earth; it hath raiſed up from their Thrones all the Kings of the Nations; all they ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto thee, art thou alſo become weak as we are? art thou alſo become like unto us? now art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning? How art thou cut down to the ground that didſt weaken the Nations? For thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God: I will ſit alſo upon the Mount of the Congregation in the ſides of the North, That is, upon Mount *Zion*, for juſt ſo the *Pſalmiſt* deſcribes
Pſal. 48. 2. it, *Beautiful for ſituation, the joy of the whole Earth is Mount* Zion, *on the ſides of the North.* Here the King of *Babylon* threatens to take *Jeruſalem*, and to demoliſh the *Temple* where the Congregation of *Iſrael* met for the Worſhip of the true God; *I will alſo ſit upon the Mount of the Congregation in the ſides of the North.* Much in the ſame Style with the threatnings of Modern *Babylon*, *I will deſtroy the Reformation, I will extirpate the Northern Hereſie.*

And

And then he goes on, *I will aſcend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the moſt High: Yet thou ſhalt be brought down to the grave, to the ſides of the pit: They that ſee thee ſhall narrowly look upon thee, and conſider thee, ſaying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did ſhake Kingdoms; that made the World as a Wilderneſs, and deſtroyed the Cities thereof, and opened not the Houſe of his Priſoners?*

God ſeems already to have begun this Work, in the late glorious Victory at Sea; and I hope he will *cut it ſhort in righteouſneſs.* I have ſometimes heretofore wondred, Why at the deſtruction of Modern and Myſtical *Babylon* the Scripture ſhould make ſo expreſs mention of great wailing and lamentation for the loſs of Her *Ships* and *Seamen*: Little imagining thirty years ago, that any of the *Kingdoms* who had *given their power to the Beaſt* would ever have arrived to that mighty *Naval* Force: But the *Scripture ſaith nothing in vain.* Rev. 18. 17.

Whether, and how far, Succeſs is an argument of a good Cauſe: I ſhall not now debate: But thus much, I think, may ſafely be affirmed, That the Providence of God doth ſometimes, without plain and downright Miracles, ſo viſibly ſhew it ſelf, that we cannot with-

out great ſtupidity and obſtinacy refuſe to acknowledge it.

I grant, the Cauſe muſt firſt be manifeſtly juſt, before Succeſs can be made an Argument of Gods favour to it and approbation of it: And if the Cauſe of true Religion, and the neceſſary defence of it againſt a falſe and Idolatrous Worſhip, be a good Cauſe, *Ours* is ſo: And I do not here beg the Queſtion; we have abundantly proved it to the confuſion of our Adverſaries: If the vindication of the common Liberties of Mankind, againſt Tyranny and Oppreſſion, be a good Cauſe, then *Ours* is ſo: And this needs not to be proved, it is ſo glaringly evident to all the World. And as our Cauſe is not like *theirs*, ſo neither hath *their Rock* been *like our Rock, our Enemies themſelves being Judges.*

And yet as bad an argument as ſucceſs is of a good Cauſe, I am ſorry to ſay it, but I am afraid it is true, it is like in the concluſion to prove the beſt Argument of all other to convince thoſe who have ſo long pretended conſcience againſt ſubmiſſion to the preſent Government.

Meer Succeſs is certainly one of the worſt Arguments in the World of a good Cauſe, and the moſt improper to ſatisfie Conſcience: And yet

yet we find by experience, that in the iſſue it is the moſt ſucceſsful of all other Arguments; and do's in a very odd but effectual way ſatisfie the Conſciences of a great many men by ſhewing them their Intereſt.

God has of late viſibly made bare his Arm in our behalf, though ſome are ſtill ſo blind and obſtinate that they will not ſee it: Like thoſe of whom the *Prophet* complains, *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee, but they ſhall ſee, and be aſhamed for their envy at thy People.* Iſa. 26. 11.

Thus have I repreſented unto you a mighty *Monarch*, who like a fiery *Comet* hath hung over *Europe* for many years; and by his malignant influence hath made ſuch terrible havock and devaſtations in this part of the World.

Let us now turn our View to the other part of the *Text*: And behold a greater than he is here: A Prince of a quite different Character, who does *underſtand and know God to be the Lord, which doth exerciſe loving-kindneſs and judgment and righteouſneſs in the Earth*: And who hath made it the great Study and Endeavour of his life to imitate theſe Divine Perfections, as far as the imperfection of humane nature in this mortal ſtate will admit: I ſay, a greater than he is here; who never ſaid or did an inſolent thing,

but

but inſtead of deſpiſing his Enemies has upon all occaſions encounter'd them with an undaunted Spirit and reſolution.

This is the Man whom God hath honoured to give a Check to this Mighty Man of the Earth, and to put a hook into the Noſtrils of this great *Leviathan* who has ſo long had his paſtime in the Seas.

But we will not inſult, as He once did in a moſt unprincely manner over a Man much better than himſelf, when he believed Him to have been ſlain at the *Boyne*: And indeed Death came then as near to him as was poſſible without killing him: But the merciful Providence of God was pleaſed to ſtep in for his Preſervation, almoſt by a Miracle: For I do not believe that from the firſt uſe of great Guns to *that* Day, any mortal man ever had his ſhoulder ſo kindly kiſs'd by a Cannon bullet.

But I will not treſpaſs any further upon that which is the great Ornament of all his other Vertues; though I have ſaid nothing of Him but what all the World does ſee and muſt acknowledge: He is as much above being flatter'd, as it is beneath an honeſt and a generous mind to flatter.

Let

Let us then glory in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of our Salvation: Let us now in the preſence of all his People pay our moſt thankful acknowledgments to him *who is worthy to be praiſed*; even to *the Lord God of Iſrael, who alone doth wondrous things*: Who *giveth Victory unto Kings*, and hath *preſerved* our *David his Servant from the hurtful* Sword.

And let us humbly beſeech Almighty God, that he would long preſerve to us the invaluable Bleſſing of our two Excellent Princes; whom the Providence of God hath ſent amongſt us, like two good Angels; not to reſcue two or three perſons, but almoſt a whole Nation out of *Sodom*: By ſaving us I hope at laſt from our Vices, as well as at firſt from that Vengeance which was juſt ready to have been poured down upon us.

Two Sovereign Princes reigning together, and in the ſame Throne; and yet ſo intirely one, as perhaps no Nation, no Age can furniſh us with a Parallel: Two Princes perfectly united in the ſame Deſign of promoting the true Religion, and the Publick Welfare, by reforming our Manners, and as far as is poſſible, by repairing the breaches, and healing the Diviſions of a miſerably diſtracted Church and Nation:

Nation: In a Word, Two Princes who are contented to ſacrifice Themſelves and their whole Time to the care of the Publick: And for the ſake of that to deny themſelves almoſt all ſort of eaſe and pleaſure: *To deny themſelves*, did I ſay? No, they have wiſely and judiciouſly choſen the trueſt and higheſt Pleaſure that this World knows, the Pleaſure of doing good, and being Benefactors to mankind. May they have a long and happy Reign over us, to make us happy, and to lay up in ſtore for Themſelves A Happineſs without meaſure, and without end, in Gods glorious and everlaſting Kingdom: for his Mercies ſake in *Jeſus Chriſt*, to whom with thee, *O Father*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, be all Honour and Glory, Thankſgiving and Praiſe, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.

Advertiſement.

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